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Blast Killed S.U. Students [redacted]

Deputy Fingered by FBI

A single shotgun blast fired by a sheriff's deputy killed two students Nov. 16 during a confrontation with police at Southern University in Baton Rouge, the FBI said today.

The Associated Press quoted the Washington Post as saying the deputy had tentatively been identified and is expected to become the subject of a federal grand jury investigation in Louisiana.

However, the Justice Department today denied the Post's report. "While the federal investigation has narrowed the list of subjects, it has not gone beyond that," a spokesman for the Justice Department said.

Louisiana Attorney General William Guste had said in his committee's preliminary report Dec. 15 that the fatal shot had been pinpointed to an area where six men had gathered, an area "where sheriff's deputies had deployed."

The FBI investigation on the killings at Southern may not be completed until February, the report said, and officials said no decision will be made before an "exhaustive review" of all information submitted by the bureau.

However, information submitted so far suggests the deputy could be prosecuted under civil rights statutes, the report said.

The Justice Department probably will take no steps until the district attorney of East Baton Rouge Parish has decided whether or not he will file a criminal indictment in connection with the shooting, the report said.

But sources also said that if state officials appear to be dragging their feet, the Justice Department might go forward with its case first.

The U.S. Attorney in Baton Rouge, Doug Gonzalez, asked if he thought the state investigation appeared to be lagging, said "No comment."